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THE
PROBLEM OF PERSONALITY

THESIS PRESENTED FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF
PHILOSOPHY, AT CORNELL UNIVERSITY, JUNE, 1889.

BY

ELIZA RITCHIE.

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"Il est dangereux de trop faire voir à l'homme combien il est égal aux bêtes sans lui montrer sa grandeur. Il est encore dangereux de lui faire trop voir sa grandeur sans sa bassesse. Il est encore plus dangereux de lui laisser ignorer l'un et l'autre. Mais il est très avantageux de lui représenter l'un et l'autre."

—PASCAL'S PENSÉES.

ITHACA, N. Y.
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The Problem of Personality.

CHAPTER I.

THE PROBLEM.

IT is a common accusation brought against Philosophy that it makes no true progress,—that it never attains to definite and permanent results. The problems that engaged it two thousand years ago are, it is said, still unsolved,—the questions that Socrates asked of his fellow citizens on the streets of Athens still wait for a final answer. And this lack of result is contrasted with the rich fruits that have been gathered in the various departments of physical science, where each patient investigator may hope to make some small addition to the great sum of human knowledge. It may be that the objection thus raised shows a certain ignorance as to the sense in which a solution is to be expected to speculative problems. Perhaps such objection may be met by pointing out that it is in the gradual elucidation of what such questions involve, and the raising of the mind by means of them to ever higher spheres of thought, rather than in categorical answers, that the work of philosophy consists. And it may be urged that, in some measure, the inquirer has himself to blame if he does not recognize that certain territories have been conquered for humanity even in the obscure regions of metaphysical speculation. The scoffer at the vanity of philosophical research may be but a modern Pilate who will listen to no answer to his own question of skeptical indifference :—What is Truth?

Yet the criticism is not altogether unfounded or unjust. In the field of scientific discovery each successive student finds a large body of well-ascertained facts and thoroughly tested hypotheses already within his reach ; and to these he

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may hope to add according to his ability and industry ; while from the varying and often conflicting systems of speculative philosophies each new thinker must make his choice. No great philosophic writer has accepted the teaching of his predecessor as a whole, however much he may have been influenced by it. He does not content himself with enlarging the scope, or tracing out the details, of a previous theory, but usually begins *de novo* and institutes a new system for himself. We maintain, indeed, that amid this apparent discord and confusion there is progress, real and permanent, but it undoubtedly seems vague and fluctuating as compared with the steady growth of natural science. No wonder that the practical spirit of our time turns to that direction where the results seem at once more immediate, more certain, and more useful.

It is not the purpose of this essay to discuss the value and validity of philosophic study. If we refer to the weak point in the philosophic armour, it is for the purpose of showing how, in the writer's opinion, it may be strengthened. If philosophical study is to be a living force, leading men to new truths or giving them a deeper insight into truths already known, surely it must effect its purpose,—not by ignoring the results of modern scientific research, the influence of which is continually, though often to us unconsciously, moulding our views of life and the world ;—but rather by cordially accepting the new side lights thus thrown upon its problems, and endeavoring to grasp and present the separate or but partially connected facts thus brought into view by uniting them in a rational and intelligible system. It is, at all events, in this spirit that we would approach the subject of personality.

If there is one matter discussed by speculative thinkers which can claim to be of universal interest, it is the nature of the personality of man himself. However altruistic we may be in theory or practice, however we may be occupied with the marvels of nature or the products of art, no man would deny that the supreme interests of life centre round that composite, ill-defined, dimly understood,

but vividly real being he calls himself. What is this self? What constitutes a person? What am I? Fundamental as these questions appear, still more searching is this other: Is there such an entity as a self, a person, an ego? This is no metaphysical straw-splitting. A "psychology without a soul" is offered us to-day not by speculative philosophy but in the name of sober and exact science. It has been affirmed that from the time of Descartes, materialism is a mere anachronism, but the idealist can no longer lay that flattering unction to his soul. In truth, anachronism or no, materialism has never left the field. Idealism may have triumphed time and again, but its enemy has not recognized its own defeat. Like the strong man in the legend, who, thrown to the ground only gathered new strength from touching mother earth, so materialism, unable to hold its own as a speculative system, falls back upon physical science, and gains from its contact with nature that vigor and activity which render it formidable. We can in fact only successfully combat the errors of any system of thought when we fully recognize what measure of truth is mixed up with it. That there is, in a very real sense, a soul, an ego, will be made apparent by the examination we have undertaken into the significance of the word personality.

What constitutes personality? The concept seems at first sight so simple as hardly to demand explanation or definition. Yet the word is used to express very various, and sometimes very vague and indefinite notions. What we want at the outset of our inquiry into the subject is a succinct and clear account of what we commonly mean by the term "person," as that word is usually employed in every-day speech. The definition thus formulated may, it is true, be subsequently found to be more or less insufficient and to require important correction, as our insight into what it includes becomes deeper and clearer by analysis and reflection. Something of this sort almost inevitably follows the attempt to penetrate to the true significance of facts which have been always present to us, and with which in a sense we have been all our lives familiar. But a provisional definition will

at least serve to mark out the field of our inquiries, and may, perhaps, at the same time indicate the path by which it can be most readily and conveniently approached.

The term "person" suggests at once to us "man." Man, as we commonly regard him, consists of a mind or spirit connected with a human organism or body. What we mean by a person, in the same general sense, seems to be a spirit, distinct from other spirits, having a conscious life of its own, —able, that is, to connect its own states in a series and view them as pertaining to itself, and able to look forward to other, as yet unseen, states with the expectation that they too will be a part of its own consciousness. Leaving for the moment all theological and spiritualistic teaching out of the question, we may further assert that in experience we always find such independent and self-conscious spirit connected with, and manifesting itself through, a material organism. What constitutes a personality appears to be, therefore, first, the fact of self-consciousness; secondly, a certain impenetrability or self-maintaining individuality; and, lastly, the conjunction of psychical states with a physical organism.

Accepting this as a temporary and provisional account of our subject, we may at once proceed to examine it on the basis of this three-fold division. Having considered it thus in detail, by means of this somewhat rough analysis of the notion in its popular acceptation, it will finally be necessary to gather up the results of our investigation, and observe what clearer and fuller significance the idea of personality has gained for us.

We shall first consider the connection of the phenomena of mental life with the physical organism. The thorough examination of this question includes the subject-matter of a whole science,—that of physiological psychology. But we are here in no wise concerned with the details connected with the physical basis of each mental act or state of consciousness. We have merely to do with the significance of there being such a basis, and with the conclusions which we may, or must, draw from the fact of the conjunction of physical and psychical phenomena. Our problem here will be: How

can we most adequately and rationally represent to ourselves the relation existing between mind and body, due weight being given to facts ascertained by science with regard to both? And, what are the effects, if any, of the determination we reach in respect to this relation upon our conception of the nature of the two classes of phenomena?

This question is one which may be said to lie on the borderland between psychology and metaphysics. It does not strictly come within the domain of the former, for psychology is a science of phenomena only. But it is a problem to which we are inevitably led by the course of psychological investigation. So fundamental, indeed, is it to the psychologist, that the whole tone and color of his work, its prevailing direction and ultimate results, are almost inevitably affected by his attitude towards it. The new school of psychology, is, in fact, differentiated from the older school mainly by its altered conception of the relation of the mind with the body.

If this first part of our subject is of no small psychological interest, the second is of at least equal importance to the student of metaphysics. While psychologists differ concerning the existence of a self, and dispute whether the series of states of consciousness is all that we can learn by introspection, or whether we must assume an entity or unifying principle underlying them, the metaphysician is as much as ever bound to regard the fact of self-consciousness,—whatever its implications,—as the necessary condition of all knowledge and the most immediately certain fact of existence. The “*Cogito ergo sum*” of Descartes still represents, however crudely, the starting point of ontological speculation; and Kant’s “Unity of apperception” still expresses, however indefinitely, the central thought of all modern theories of cognition. But our outlook need not include such a vast field as we have here indicated, since in our present investigation we shall be concerned with self-consciousness, not so much as the elementary datum of thought—the foundation of the phenomenal world, but rather as marking out the limits of mind as we usually consider it, and as pointing out the boundary line which distinguishes the “person” from the “thing.”

Closely connected with self-consciousness, yet not identical with it, is the third attribute or characteristic which appears to belong to personality,—namely Individuality, by which is meant that which distinguishes the series of conscious states making up one man's experience from the more or less similar series which constitute the lives of others. This isolation of the spirit, the marking off as it were, of a man's life from that of his fellow creatures, at once gives it the possibility of an ethical value, is what makes personal character possible, and at the same time seems to impress it with a stamp of finiteness and limitation, just because the stream of his experience must flow in one narrow channel, and apparently never loses itself in the wide ocean of universal thought and feeling. Hence this branch of our subject will naturally lead to a consideration of personality in its ethical aspect, that is as individual character. We shall have to investigate what are the sources of character, and to face the ethical problems which we may find involved. Finally, it will be necessary to consider whether personality finds its highest exponent in man, or whether it is a category which we may legitimately apply to that Infinite Being which Philosophy knows as the Absolute or Unconditioned, but which the religious consciousness of mankind recognizes as God.

CHAPTER II.

THE RELATION OF MIND AND BODY.

We have said that in experience mind is only found in connection with a material organism. What, then, is implied in this fact? What is the nature of the link which binds together "mind and its foreign companion," as Mr. Sully somewhat happily phrases it? Let us first examine the subject from the physiological standpoint.

The facts of the case may be briefly summarized as follows: Certain particles of matter in motion act as stimuli on the end-organs of the human body. A certain form of molecular motion is thus started in the nerves, and is conveyed by them to the central organs of the nervous system which are thus excited to activity. As the afferent, or sensory nerves thus conduct motion in, so the efferent, or motor nerves conduct motion out, being set in motion by the central organs, and in their turn exciting the muscles. Thus we have a closed circle of purely physical causation, forming a perfectly consistent account of the action of the sensory and motor mechanism of the human organism. Where in this circle do we meet with mind, with sensation and will? When the motion which has been set up in the nerves by the action of the external stimulus on the end-organ of sense has been conveyed to some part of the brain, then, simultaneously with the motion of some portions of the brain matter, there is a sensation. When again the molecular motion in a part of the brain is conveyed to an efferent nerve, and by it to a muscle, there is a consciousness of volition. What is the relation between sensations and volitions, or states of consciousness, and the purely physical phenomenon of the motion of the molecules which form part of the nervous system of the human body? The answer of the observer of the physiological facts must be this: motion in the nervous molecules is subject to the uni-

versal law of the conservation of energy. Now, if we suppose motion in the sensory nerves to be transformed on reaching the brain into a sensation, then either the law of the conservation of energy is violated, or we must take sensation to be *itself* a mode of motion. But the latter alternative is unthinkable, we cannot materialize a mental process; the psychical is as such not the physical, a sensation cannot *be* a motion of particles of matter. The physical process must, therefore, be thought as uninterrupted by the sensation,—as a continuous process; the sensation being an accompaniment of a part of this physical process. This much the physiologist may claim to have proved,—mental phenomena do accompany, and do not interrupt, the chain of physical phenomena.

So far all is simple, but at this point our difficulties begin. Is there any relation between the motion of particles of matter in the cells and fibres of the nervous system and the mental phenomena which accompany them? And, if so, how is this relation to be expressed? In view of the fact that mental events of a certain definite character do always accompany certain nervous events of a no less definite character, and that the former vary in intensity according to the strength of the latter, it seems impossible to deny the existence of a connection between the two sets of phenomena. But what kind of connection? The answer usually given is that there is a certain invariable concomitance of parallelism, and this may fairly be granted as ascertained beyond reasonable doubt. But surely this is an insufficient answer to the question; it is no explanation of the relation, but amounts only to the bare statement that there must be *some* connection between phenomena which appear simultaneously, and somehow correspond in intensity.

But why not, it may be asked, have recourse to the familiar scientific category of causation? Why not say that a motion of the molecules of nerve matter *causes* sensations to arise in the mind, and that volition acting through the medium of the motor nerves *causes* the action of the muscles? The objection has been already indicated. The cause of motion in a nervous molecule is, and must be, a preceding motion in

some material body. In this sense alone does causation enter into the scientific conception of things. The particles of matter in the human organism are caused to move precisely as are all the other particles of matter in the universe. And so also the effect of motion is other motion. Thus we are forbidden to represent to ourselves mind and body as mutually inter-acting as cause and effect,—their lines are parallel and can never intersect.

Thus the physiologist insists on the impossibility of a mental state being considered as in any intelligible sense the cause of a movement in the physical organism, and the force of his reasoning is indisputable. It is true that many of the facts necessary to *prove* that the molecules of matter in the brain and nerves are subject to the same conditions as are all other forms of matter may not be yet forthcoming; but as all discoveries hitherto made tend in that direction, and as the contrary supposition—that mind in some way intervenes as a determining element in the production of bodily movements,—is incompatible with the hypothesis of the conservation of energy—an hypothesis which investigation in all the fields of physical science has confirmed, it would seem that the acceptance of this conclusion is inevitable.

In passing, we may notice that the crude form of materialism, not unfrequently met with, which describes the phenomena of consciousness as effects, or products, of matter in motion, is just as false to physical science as is the psychological assumption that the former is "cause" of the latter. If causation is a category applicable to the relation between mind and body, its application cannot be limited in this one-sided and arbitrary way. If a psychical change can be the *effect* of a physical motion, it must be a link in the chain of casual connection,—it must be cause as well as effect.

Let us now see what can be said in defense of the "common-sense" view, which in defiance of the facts brought forward by scientific investigation, persists in regarding the connection between physical and mental states as a casual one. That this is the view of mankind at large is indisputable; it is so bound up with our every day speech that the most

ardent believer in the theory of concomitance can with difficulty avoid the use of language which implies that very interaction which he repudiates. The influence of mind over matter, the effect of a fit of dyspepsia on the spirits, the pain caused by a sprained ankle—such phrases we constantly employ, and they pass unchallenged by the most critical hearer. This of itself, however, is far from conclusive as to the merits of the case involved. We know that all language descriptive of mental phenomena was originally borrowed from terms properly applicable only to material things, and philosophy has always felt the difficulty of having to get rid of the presuppositions lurking in its very nomenclature. Just as it proves nothing either for or against the immateriality of the soul that the word "spirit" originally meant "breath," so no evidence is given of the real nature of the bond between mental and bodily states by the fact that in ordinary speech we usually designate that relation as a casual one.

A more serious argument may be urged in favour of the casual connection, by pointing out that, without such a relation we can get no rational view of what man is. We may, it is true, force ourselves to the belief that, as regards his bodily organism, man is an automaton. But consciousness is a fact which can neither be ignored nor denied. What then is man as regards his conscious life? Is his mind another automaton, set going in mysterious agreement with the bodily machine? or are mental phenomena events disconnected with, and isolated from, each other, but each the result of the state of the physical automaton at the time? The latter supposition looks suspiciously like an attempt to let sensation slip in at a postern gate after ceremoniously shutting it out of the front door,—the former is simply a return to the old metaphysical solution of preëstablished harmony with the theological reference which constituted its sole foundation, omitted.

Notice the difficulty: if mental states are effects of changes in the physical organism, then no further explanation is needed of the fact that such states vary in intensity and in duration in a constant ratio to changes in their material basis.

But if this is, as has been indicated, an untenable view, then the occurrence of a certain mental phenomenon must either be uncaused,—that is, not conditioned by any preceding event, or it must be due, and due only, to a preceding *mental* phenomenon, which itself must be similarly referred back to a previous link in the same mental chain. Now let us see how this theory works when applied to a given case. I have a feeling of pain which appears to me to be located in a certain part of my body. This feeling of pain is a mental state. Is this mental state *uncaused*? It at least appears to have effects. I am, for example, led to think of and desire, some remedy for the pain. Both knowing and willing thus result from the feeling. If the pain, a mental state, be a cause how can it not be an effect? But we are shut out from regarding it as an effect of the state of the bodily organism,—it is only a “concomitant” of such state. But it is difficult, to say the least, to see how my present feeling of pain can have been “caused” by previous mental phenomena, which may have been quite disconnected with this painful sensation. Perhaps I awake from a sound sleep and a certain feeling or sensation arises. As far as we can see there is no conceivable connection between the new state of feeling and the blank in consciousness that preceded it.

Still more difficult to explain, on the theory we are considering, is the fact of the first rise of psychical states in the life of the individual. If the law of causation is to hold in the mental sphere, and there is no inter-action between the physical and the psychical, then what are we to regard as the cause, or necessary precedent phenomenon, of the first faint stirring of feeling in the earliest dawn of the individual consciousness? Are we forced to conclude, either that mental phenomena are not causally related at all, or that, in contradiction to the theory of parallelism or concomitance, the earliest feeling is caused by the motions of particles of matter in the newly-formed organism?

If, then, science forbids us to describe mental states as caused by changes in the physical organism, and we cannot conceive of them as in all instances the effects of previous men-

tal states, can we rationally regard them as not being caused at all? It is not uncommon to see the statement that causation is only legitimately applicable to the relation in time between moving bodies or particles of matter. There is no objection to this limitation of the category, provided always we recognize that just the same necessity of thought which causes us to connect together a material change with antecedent material changes, also leads us to make a similar connection in thought between *any* phenomenon, mental as well as material, and what precedes it. It is only when we realize that causation is a mode of thought,—a relation, and therefore, like all relations, pertains not to being as such, but to our knowledge of being, that we get a light thrown upon this difficult subject. Then we see that the applicability of causation to the relation between mind and body is but a question of words. The facts of importance and of indisputable certainty are these; mental and bodily states are related,—physical changes are followed by physical changes, and mental, by mental changes; and changes in the one series occur simultaneously and proportionately with changes in the other series. It is necessary to rational thinking that these relations should be recognized,—to know any phenomenon whatever, is to know it in its relations,—but it is not necessary to call any or all of these relations, causation. Let the physicist confine causation to the physical sphere exclusively, let the psychologist if he will, speak of the "associative power" of ideas, and let the synchronous change in nervous molecules and conscious feeling be described as the "conditioning" of the one by the other,—only let it be remembered that there is nothing specially appropriate in these uses of the words. Such language is but the clumsy attempt of our finite intellect to express, in this one instance, the universal truth that rational knowledge sees nature, not as composed of separated and isolated parts, but as a whole, in and for which each part has its existence.

So far we have been considering the facts regarding the relation of mind and body. Can we, now, present any hypothesis which shall account in an intelligible way for these

facts? A certain complexus of material particles we know as a human organism; a certain series of psychical states we know as the corresponding human mind. We have compared the mental and bodily phenomena to two parallel lines, a point in one corresponding to a point in the other; since a change in a mental state coincides in time with, and is proportional in intensity to, a change in the nervous matter of the brain. But for this figure we may substitute another, that of a curved line, the concave and convex sides of which picture to us the physical and mental series of phenomena. The sides of the line, as such, are not entities, the line is the unit, they are only *aspects* of the line. If this figure is, in truth, applicable, we see at once that the concomitance of physical and psychical is unavoidable. The convexity of the line does not "cause" the concavity, nor does the change in the physical state "cause" change in the psychical condition. It is not a case of causation but of identity. Not that the corresponding phenomena of mind and matter are identical, any more than concavity is identical with convexity; the two are totally unlike, yet they correspond in their difference as being two aspects, two sides, of one thing. What then must we understand by the line itself? The answer must be, the person, that alone constitutes the true entity. Consciousness is not the mere accidental offshoot of nervous processes, as the materialist has asserted; matter is not the phantasmal appearance of mind, as the spiritualist sometimes maintains; each is a side of reality, and differing from its fellow as an aspect, is one with it in the unity of the person.

But this view has its own difficulties, the chief of which may be put thus: How is it that changes take place in the particles of the body, and even in the centres of the nervous system when there is apparently a total absence of consciousness? Are there not many motions on the physical side without any concomitant change on the mental side?

The theory which endeavors to satisfy this very pertinent objection to the "double-faced unity" view of mind and matter, is one which was brought forward in England some

years ago by the late Professor Clifford, but which has perhaps been presented with more of scientific caution, and on a sounder philosophical basis by the great German physiologist, Wundt. In brief, it consists in the assumption that *all* matter has not only a physical but a "psychical side,"—a rudimentary feeling or impulse—"Trieb" in Wundt's language ; and that in rising through the scale of evolution, this at first mere elementary potentiality of feeling becomes more and more developed and elaborated till the highest point is reached in man, when the structure of the nervous system is most complex and intricate, and the mental consciousness has reached a proportionate stage of perfection. This hypothesis, it is evident, not only supports the physiologist in the doctrine of concomitance, but also is in thorough harmony with the general tenor of the evolutionary view of the universe. As Professor Clifford points out, it bridges over the otherwise impassable chasm between conscious and unconscious matter, between sentient and non-sentient life, and represents the series of evolutionary development, on its mental as well as on its physical side, as a continuous, unbroken chain.

It has been held that this hypothesis requires for its support the supposition of "unconscious mental states," in order to enable it to answer satisfactorily the difficulty already propounded,—namely, the intermittent nature of consciousness itself. Without attempting to go deeply into this interesting but obscure question, it may suffice to point out that, when consciousness is suspended, as during sleep or a swoon, the particles of matter in the nervous system are not in precisely the same state as when consciousness is present. It cannot be too much emphasized that *our* consciousness is not constituted by detached feelings or ideas. When we are conscious, we are self-conscious, there is a thread of memory stringing together, as it were, the present momentary feeling with those immediately preceding it. Memory may be very faint, the feelings it recalls very simple and few, but while we are conscious we have *some* memory. Now it is conceivable that while a man is unconscious, as in sleep or in a fainting fit, the molecules of nervous matter in his brain may still be in mo-

tion and concomitant psychical states may occur, but these psychical states are like those connected with low organisms or inorganic atoms, that is they are not united by memory so as to form a consciousness. Only in some such sense does the conception of unconscious mind seem tenable.

If this theory be accepted as giving us on the whole the most rational and adequate view of this difficult subject, two consequences must follow from it. First, whatever reality we ascribe to the body must also be ascribed to the mind, and *vice versa*. And, secondly, the mind is a unity in the same sense, and only in the same sense, as is the bodily organism. Here, as in the case of the causal relation already referred to, we must not forget that such categories do not exist in independence of knowledge. We form a unity, whenever, by virtue of one synthetic power we gather up observed phenomena into one. A ganglion cell in the human body is a unit, when we study it in relation to other ganglion cells or other parts of the organism, but the molecules which make up the matter of such a cell are also units, and the whole human body is itself a unit, and according to the theory we have been considering, body and mind together constitute the still higher unity of the person. In our study of mind we may, if we will, observe each separate psychical state, and regard the mind as merely a series of such; but if we are studying the human mind in comparison with other minds, or with what is non-mental, we must be able to recognize such mind as a unity,—not, indeed, as a simple, indivisible unity, but rather as one that is highly complex and susceptible of indefinitely minute analysis—but a unity for all that.

CHAPTER III.

PERSONALITY AS SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS.

The view we have here adopted, that personality is the unity of which mind and body are the two opposite sides or aspects opens out to us new problems. We have hitherto considered the conjunction of physical and psychical phenomena in man, but we are at once confronted by the question, whether personality is limited to man? If so, what is it which differentiates the union of mental and bodily conditions in man, from what is, to all appearance the similar union in the lower animals? In the dog, just as truly as in the dog's master, there seem to be the signs of feeling, sensations, and memory,—reasoning powers of some sort, and emotions more or less strong. The body of the dog, as far as we can judge, expresses changes in the mental states, just as does the body of the man. Such expressions, it is true, are more liable to be mis-read by us than are the outward indications of feeling, will and thought in our fellowmen; but we also are liable to error in our efforts to interpret the significant actions, words, and gestures of children and savages. In all such cases we may blunder in translating the physical symbol into its psychical equivalent, but this has no bearing on the fact of there being such an equivalent. Is the dog then a person? It is certainly contrary to all usage to apply the term to members of the "brute creation." Here, however, as elsewhere, we must remember that words are the crystallizations of *past* beliefs; and that to force modern conceptions into a Procrustian bed of verbal forms, is to make words our masters instead of our servants. The rise and growth of the evolutionary theory has, within the last half century totally altered the conception of our relation to the other members of the animal world. The differences have been shown to be less, the resemblance greater, between man and other ani-

mals, than had previously been surmised. But if, as science seems to teach, man has been developed in accordance with natural law from the brute, if morally, intellectually, and physically there is no absolute chasm between the lowest races of man and certain of the higher forms of animal life, then we are forced to ask, on what grounds we are justified in drawing a hard and fast line at this one point in the evolutionary series, and in asserting that above this is complete personality, while below it there is none. If, however we acknowledge no such limit, then at what stage of complexity in the organism, and of development of the higher mental faculties does personality first appear? We have accepted as at least probable the assumption that all matter has a "psychical side," yet to apply personality to the lower forms of organic life, and even to inorganic particles of matter, is obviously to rob the notion of all significance.

We must, therefore, proceed to consider the chief characteristic marks of personality. The most obvious of these is self-consciousness. This, as has been frequently pointed out by philosophical writers, is the one fact of absolute unchanging certainty, which we seem to know intuitively as the permanent element in our constantly changing states of mind. Yet when we are asked to point out this self-evident fact of our mental life, we can only reply that it is involved in our knowledge of such mental life itself. In introspection the mind appears as a series of states, of internal phenomena; the fact of self-consciousness seems to be just this, that the states *are a series*. At any one point there is the power of recalling certain past states, or, more strictly speaking, along with the appearance of a state there is the feeling that it, or one resembling it, has been experienced before. When this reference of the terms to one another is present there is a series, and there must be essentially a consciousness of the self, that is, of a permanency in the flux, though it may not be more than very vaguely recognized. If this be true, it follows that we must hold the essential element in self-consciousness is *memory*. Memory differs as we all know in an indefinite degree in respect to its clearness, vivacity and ex-

tent, but some degree of the power of recollection seems absolutely necessary to the recognition of personal identity. If only the momentary unrelated sensation, whatever it might be, was present at the time,—if when that passed it passed away wholly, and was succeeded by another in which equally there was no reminiscence of any past state, it is impossible to see how self-consciousness could exist. But if with a feeling there comes a consciousness that it is like, or unlike, a past experience, even though the recognition is vague and unformulated, and the past so referred to was only that immediately preceding the feeling now in consciousness, there is thereby constituted a consciousness of self, which, however rudimentary and simple, is the same in kind as the fully-developed and complex self-consciousness of the civilized adult human being. If this be so, I think it cannot be denied that animals, at least those which possess highly developed organisms, are self-conscious. It is true that, as we descend the scale in the lower forms of animal life we find reflex action to be the basis of a number of movements which at first sight appear to be voluntarily and consciously co-ordinated; but the assumption that the actions of brutes are *all* unaccompanied by self-consciousness—that there is no memory of even an immediate past, or expectation of even an immediate future—is not only contradicted by observation, but is irreconcilable with the scientific conception of continuity and progress in psychical life, since it renders impossible any evolution in the mental sphere corresponding to that in the physical organism.

Memory itself, moreover, is not a power which suddenly appears in its completeness at a certain level in the ascending scale of animal life. It appears gradually, at first in a form which we might hesitate to call memory at all. Dr. Romanes, in his work on "*Mental Evolution in Animals*," gives an interesting analysis of the rise of memory, which he holds first appears in the ascending scale of animal life with the Echinodermata, and in the individual human subject during the first week after birth.

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"The next stage of memory that it appears to me possible to distinguish by any definite interval from the first named, is that of feeling a present sensation to be like a past sensation. In order to do this there may be no memory of the sensation between the two successive occasions of its occurrence, and neither need there be any association of ideas. Only this takes place. When the sensation recurs the second, third, or fourth time, etc., it is recognized as like the sensation when it occurred the first time—as like a sensation which is not unfamiliar. Thus, for example, according to Sigismund, who has devoted much careful attention to the psychogenesis of infants, it appears that the sweet taste of milk being remembered by newly-born infants, causes them to prefer sweet tastes in general to tastes of any other kind." (p. 114.)

Dr. Romanes then proceeds to show that the next stage of the nascent memory is the recognition of a sensation as unlike a past sensation, and continues: "It will be observed that in dealing with these stages of memory in very young infants, where as yet no association can either be supposed to be present or is needed to explain the facts, we at once encounter the question whether the memory is to be considered as really due to individual experience, or as an hereditary endowment, i. e., an instinct. And here it becomes apposite to refer to the old and highly interesting experiment of Galen, which definitely answers this question with reference to animals. For soon after its birth, and before it had ever sucked, Galen took a kid and placed before it a row of similar basins, filled respectively with milk, wine, oil, honey, and flour. The kid, after examining the basins by smell, selected the one which was filled with milk. This unquestionably proves the fact of hereditary memory, or instinct, in the case of the kid; and therefore it is probable that the same, at all events in part, applies to the case of the child." "But although we

freely admit that the memory of milk is, at all events in large part, hereditary, it is none the less memory of a kind and occurs without the association of ideas. In other words hereditary memory or instinct belongs to what I have marked off as the second and third stages of conscious memory in the largest acceptance of the term. The stages, that is, where, without any association of ideas, a present sensation is perceived as like, or unlike a past one. It makes no essential difference whether the past sensation was actually experienced by the individual itself or bequeathed to it, so to speak, by its ancestors." (pp. 115-116).

This account brings before us the gradual dawn of the beginnings of memory. And we must believe that self-consciousness, like memory, does not appear suddenly in its complete and fully developed form at any one stage of development, either in the series of living organisms in general, or in that of the individual life. We can discern the potentiality of self-consciousness even in such imperfect and elementary forms of memory as those which Dr. Romanes describes above. It would seem, however, that we can hardly speak of self-consciousness as actually present till there is a distinctly individual memory—that is, till a feeling is not only vaguely felt to be familiar, as in the case of instinctive or racial memory, but as similar to, or differing from another feeling which must, therefore, be somehow present to consciousness along with the second feeling. But, be that as it may, I think we can conclude that the consciousness of self in its simplest and most elementary form is dependent upon, and involved in memory. And such self-consciousness is a necessary factor in the notion of personality. Whether or not we accept Dr. Romanes' view as to the precise stage at which memory begins is unimportant to our present purpose. With the limited knowledge we as yet possess of animal psychology such assignments of the beginnings of particular faculties to organisms of a certain complexity must at the best be largely guess-work. What we wish to emphasize however, is that at *some* point in the evolutionary series of animal life and in the development of the individual, memory

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becomes an established fact. Before this point is reached there may be, it is true, isolated psychical phenomena connected with the individual organism,—as we have seen it is impossible to assert that any material body is without at least a potentiality of feeling,—but in our account of personality we may leave all such lower forms of conscious life out of account as they can in no intelligible sense be said to pertain to persons. Above this lowest limit we must recognize self-consciousness as gradually increasing in strength and clearness. If we assert that the ant, the dog, or the elephant has in all probability a consciousness of self, we do not imply by any means that we are justified in attributing to the minds of these animals that knowledge of self which we possess. But, on the other hand, neither have we any ground for assuming that the savage or the infant has this consciousness in as full and complete a measure as has the adult, civilized, and educated man. What we claim is merely that there appear to be no sufficient grounds for arbitrarily limiting the possession of this faculty to the human race, and attributing it to the whole of the race.

Our general conclusion, then, may be summed up in the assertion that self-consciousness is a necessary element in the concept of personality, that it is, in its simplest form dependent upon memory, and appearing first at some stage of developed organism lower than that of man, grows in clearness and completeness, till it reaches its climax in a perfectly transparent insight into the nature and powers of the self.

CHAPTER IV.

PERSONALITY AS INDIVIDUAL CHARACTER.

It would be interesting if our space permitted to endeavor to trace out in detail the gradual growth of an ever truer and more concrete personality in the animal world, from the first dim and hardly discernible dawn of self-knowledge up to the wonderful and highly complex mind of the fully developed man. The study of animal psychology, in spite of its innumerable difficulties, offers a vast and rich field to the patient inquirer. That much has already been done in this direction is known to all readers of Darwin, Lubbock, Romanes and Wundt. The mental history of the child has also been carefully and patiently studied by such competent observers as Sully, Perez, and Preyer. But we must content ourselves by a bare reference to the fact, abundantly proved by the writers just mentioned, that not only self-consciousness but all the properties of mind, knowing, feeling and willing, appear first in rudimentary and imperfect forms, and gradually grow and develop; and that so far as we can see these functions with which we are familiar in ourselves, have their counterparts, in various degrees of strength and vivacity, in the mental lives of many species of brutes. If then we suppose that not only self-consciousness, but also feeling or the consciousness of pleasure and pain, and will or power of voluntary action, are necessary to personality, it will not affect the conclusion we have already drawn,—namely, that it is a purely artificial distinction to make personality co-extensive with the human race—to limit it to man only, and to hold it to be equally appropriate to the individual human being at the earliest stage of his existence as to the adult in the full possession of his mental and bodily powers. No psychologist, perhaps, has better expressed the gradual

unfolding of the conscious personality than has the author of
"In Memoriam :"

" The baby new to earth and sky.
What time his tender palm is prest
Against the circle of the breast,
Has never thought that ' this is I.' "

But as he grows he gathers much,
And learns the use of ' I' and ' me,'
And finds, ' I am not what I see,
And other than the things I touch.' "

*So rounds he to a separate mind
From whence clear memory may begin,
As thro' the frame that binds him in
His isolation grows defined."*

Turning our attention, however, from the limits of personality, let us now examine that aspect of it which consists in individual character. In our every-day consciousness we distinguish more or less clearly the ego, or subject of knowledge, from the things we know—the objects of knowledge. But the crudest attempt at an analysis of the relations of subject and object makes it manifest that the objects we know are, *as such* parts of our mental life, parts of the stream of impressions which in their relatedness as a series constitute, in Kantian phraseology, our "empirical ego." But besides these objects of perception, there are certain realities known to the subject to exist, though not directly to be perceived by it; such are minds other than itself. Clifford called these other minds "ejects," as indicating that they are not "in" the percipient mind as objects are, but rather are realities "out of" consciousness. The term hardly seems a satisfactory one, since these other minds are, as known, as much "in" the mind of the knower as are any "objects." The truth is that those apparently harmless little prepositions, "in" and "out," as used in reference to mental synthesis, are responsible for no slight confusion of thought. But what we are here concerned to notice is the apparently absolute

separation which seems to exist between the series of conscious states constituting one mind, and the more or less similar series which make up another. The life of each individual seems a thing apart—a something impenetrable by all others. "Each in his hermit cell we live alone." Whether this isolation is as complete as we are disposed to regard it—whether it represents the truth and the whole truth—we shall have occasion to consider later. It is certainly an assumption generally made that the individuality of each person is thorough and inviolable.

But it is not individuality as mere separateness of the self which constitutes the most striking feature of personality. It is rather such individuality as the necessary basis for personal character. One man is not only not identical with another, he is also not exactly similar to any other. Each has his own distinctive marks, mental, moral, and physical, his own habits, preferences, modes of speech, gesture and action, which make him the man he is, or in popular language constitute his personality. To character, then, let us turn our attention.

If we ask concerning the "whence" of any man's character we can be referred back to but two sources,—the original nature of the man, and the circumstances under which that nature has developed. These two factors then we must examine in order to arrive at any rational interpretation of what constitutes individual character.

First, let us consider the original nature of a man. That this differs widely in different men is indisputable. Two children brought up together from infancy by the same persons, dressed alike, fed alike and taught alike, will by no means develop precisely the same character, though there will almost certainly be many points of resemblance due to their common environment. Nor can there be much doubt as to the source whence these innate differences spring. Scientific observation and every day experience, alike point to heredity as the explanation. In a modified and limited form this is acknowledged by all. No one denies that many mental and moral, as well as physical, traits are handed down from pa-

rents to children. But it is sometimes not so clearly seen that *all* the characteristics which a child has potentially, at birth, are inherited by it. Nor is it to be wondered at, if this view is not generally accepted ; to prove directly, by definite examples that such is the case is practically impossible, and *apparent* exceptions must have been noticed by every one. The whole subject is one of great obscurity. Well attested cases may indeed be quoted where, for instance, some exceptional talent has remained with a family for generations, the Herschels, the Landseers, the Pitts, the Mills, are familiar instances ; yet it seems as though heredity failed to explain a class of cases where we should *a priori*, have expected to be able to trace its course most clearly, namely, where there is that abundance of creative power which we call genius. How are we to account for a Shakespere or a Michael Angelo springing from comparatively common-place parentage ? Why should John Keats, the son of a London livery stable keeper, brought up amid sordid surroundings, develop the beauty-loving soul of an ancient Greek ? Characters, too, of extraordinary moral beauty are sometimes met with where the most degraded qualities might have been expected from the working of the laws of heredity. Accordingly, so keen a psychological student as Browning has not hesitated to represent to us the heroine of "The Ring and the Book," a woman of spotless purity and showing the most unquenchable mother-love, as the daughter of a prostitute who sells her own child. But apparent exceptions should not blind us to the truth that the real and only answer to the problem does lie in this law, even though the extreme difficulty of examining all the complex circumstances that must be taken into account, renders it impossible in many instances to trace out its workings. The known facts, that qualities often lie dormant for generations, and then reappear ; that the characteristics of one parent may either nullify or intensify in the child those of the other, that accidental and temporary causes may induce important variations in the offspring—all render the problem of tracing back the mental and moral peculiarities of an individual to their sources in the characters of parents

or ancestors an indefinitely complex one. None the less a little attention will convince us that from such sources every potentiality of mental and moral qualities in the child must have been transmitted. For what other origin is possible? None is conceivable, unless we assume a special intervention of the Deity at the starting-point of each human life. But it surely is not only more in accordance with scientific thought, but shows a more worthy conception of the divine order in the universe, to recognize events as following natural causes and obeying natural laws. God's power is, indeed, manifested in the coming into existence of a new human soul, but is it not as truly manifested in the new-born insect as in the new-born child? Is it not as truly shown in the preservation and growth of the individual mind as in its creation? If the former proceed by natural means, why not the latter? We must, therefore, it would seem, conclude that all the qualities and powers that make up an individual's character, so far as they exist potentially in him from the first dawn of life, are inherited from parents, or through them, from more remote ancestors.

Secondly, we have the scarcely less powerful influence on character which consists in what in its totality we call the environment of the individual. If it is well nigh impossible to reckon up all the factors which determine the inherited character, it is utterly beyond our power to compute all the influences due to the complex surroundings in which in civilized society the individual is brought up. Not only the great moulding forces of national, social and family life, education climate, and food affect the growing and ever changing character. Events so seemingly trifling that they seem hardly noticed,—words heard and soon forgotten—the sight of a beautiful object—the hearing of a terror-inspiring story—any of these may have consequences which imprint themselves on the whole after life-history of the child. More or less unconscious imitation of those about him may affect the moral character to an indefinite extent, and sometimes decides the tastes and life-long pursuits more than does any innate and inherited aptitude. It is often, indeed, difficult to say whether

the prevailing bent of a man's character is more due to inherited qualities or to the influences which have surrounded him in his earlier years. M. Ribot, in his interesting book on Heredity, gives in his list of cases of inherited talent some examples in which, probably, the true determining force was that of environment. Such are the numerous cases referred to where a man of genius has had a son who has followed his father's calling with considerable success, a by no means rare occurrence with celebrated painters, politicians, soldiers, etc. We can easily see how the constant sight of the parent's success might stimulate the son to follow in the same path, while the father would often be in a position to further his son's ambition. In such instances it may be hard to say how much is due to inherited talent and how much to favoring circumstances.

No one, probably, will be disposed to deny that heredity and environment have important influences in determining the personal character of every man. Are they, or are they not, the *only* factors to be reckoned with. Is it the fact that, given a full and exact knowledge of the nature which a man has inherited from his ancestors, and given also a knowledge equally complete and detailed of all the circumstances which have formed his environment,—his character might be deduced from these data with mathematical accuracy, and his action in any given case foretold with the utmost certainty and precision? This question brings us face to face with that most difficult ethical problem which is usually discussed under the somewhat misleading title of "the freedom of the will." In view of the importance of will as an element of personality, we cannot altogether avoid this subject, however hopeless it may seem to try to throw any new light upon this often examined but still obscure theme.

Were it not for the ethical difficulties which seem to follow from what is commonly called the Determinist doctrine, it would probably long ago have met with a ready acceptance. We willingly grant the enormous influence of immediate surroundings upon the character, especially in youth. Moralists themselves never weary of dilating on the effects of good and

bad example upon the child. Nor is it denied that very many mental and moral qualities and aptitudes are transmitted from one generation to another. But when we are asked to go a step farther and to believe, for example, that a thief is a thief simply because his parents were dishonest, and he thus inherited a tendency to dishonesty which tendency the surroundings in which he was brought up inevitably developed, so that the theft committed was the natural and necessary effect of given causes,—this is a conclusion that seems to take from us both the right and the power to form moral judgments. The man is responsible neither for his innate disposition nor for the circumstances in which he is placed. Can we blame him that the desire for another man's property was a stronger motive than the restraining desire for right doing, if both desires came from sources quite beyond his control? Nay more, can we praise the man who resists a temptation to dishonesty if in his case too the superior strength of his conscientious scruples over his covetous desire was merely a natural result of causes in the original production of which he had no share?

And the question is not one of only a theoretical and philosophical interest, it entails consequences of the utmost practical importance. In fact, many who never trouble themselves over the general problem of Libertarianism and Determinism are often sorely perplexed by this question of moral responsibility as it meets them in individual cases. The man who inherits a drunkard's tastes, the woman reared among impure and degraded associates—these we feel are to be pitied rather than blamed for their inevitable fall. In such cases we can clearly trace the connecting links between cause and effect. But other instances we meet with in which there are, as we say, no extenuating circumstances. The man of respectable family and well brought up, as far as we can judge, commits some crime that fills us with loathing or contempt. Are we to assume here that there are no determining causes, or not rather that they are hid from us by the limitations of our knowledge? The cause is the wickedness of the criminal's nature, it will be urged, and our de-

testation of his crime is a wholesome and just instinct of our more healthy nature. True ; but whence came the criminal's wickedness ;—from some past indulgence in evil ? Very probably, but that is only to go back to a previous link in the chain, and we meet again the question as to why he chose to indulge in evil, till at last we are forced to fall back upon the two-fold source of inherited nature and determining environment, for neither of which can the man be held accountable.

On the other hand, however, when we turn away our attention from the conduct of others, and fix it upon our own inner life, nothing appears more clear and indisputable than our power of choice in any given instance in which two or more courses of action are being considered. Another may say of me, I know that in such a case you will do so and so, and I either acknowledge the truth of what he says or attribute his error to his insufficient knowledge either of my character or of the circumstances of the supposed case. But, none the less, there is immediately present to my consciousness when the time of decision comes the possibility of the alternative course of action. I will do *A*, but I could do *B*, the very fact of a decision being made implies this. We are free agents, if consciousness of a power to choose between two or more courses of action constitutes freedom.

It is useless to ignore the contradiction of these two views, or to minimize the importance of either side. If we are to solve the problem it can only be by boldly confronting the antithesis and wresting from it its heart of truth. Man is determined, man is conscious of freedom. Unless we acknowledge that man's actions are effects of foregoing causes, we can have no *science* of ethics. Unless we assume that man is free, we can form no ethical judgments.

Let us look first at the latter alternative. Suppose we can form no ethical judgments, what then ? This will signify that when we say a man is good or bad we are only expressing, as it were in short-hand, the complex results of a number of facts,—often by us known but obscurely or not at all—of his and his ancestor's lives, the total product of which we sum up in the word "good," or "bad." The man is

what he is, his parents before him were what they were, as the inevitable result of circumstances over which they had no control,—for properly speaking they cannot be said to have had *control* over anything. The universe, in this view, presents the aspects of a vast and complicated machine of which the individual forms a tiny part,—like a little cogwheel let us suppose,—set in motion by the force of the machine and in turn transmitting this force to other portions of the great mechanism. To praise or blame the wheel for turning in one direction rather than in the other, is absurd ; it acts as it must act. Responsibility rests alone with the maker and controller of the whole machine.

Nor is this view one to be lightly set aside with a contemptuous phrase as “mere fatalism,” or denounced as false and “dangerous.” It represents a most important truth,—a truth which science in the present day everywhere proclaims, and which theology in the past has by no means overlooked. In science we call it the supremacy of Law, in religion the omnipotence of God. Predestination is merely the theological synonym for determinism. “Shall the clay say unto the potter why hast thou made me thus?” or, “what hast thou that thou didst not receive, and if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory?” expresses just this thought of the *inevitableness* of a man's character, to which we are led by a scientific examination of the facts.

But what shall we say as to the other side of the antithesis—the consciousness of a power of choice, or what we call freedom? Can this find a place in the scheme of the universe, according to the conception which we have here laid down?

Let us look again at the metaphor we have just employed. We said the universe was a huge machine and the moral responsibility for the actions of its several parts must lie, if anywhere, with him who constructed it and set it in motion. But this Being himself must, according to the determinist view, act as he is determined to act ; or in Spinoza's words, God acts by the necessity of his own nature. But if man cannot be held responsible for his original nature, so neither can that great Being whom we are supposing to have created and set

in motion the universe. All moral responsibility is thus eliminated; the creator is determined by his own nature to create, so that his action is purely mechanical,—he is himself but one part of a mechanical whole. If, however, abandoning this conception of a literal *Deus ex machina*, we assume that the universe must have in some way *in itself* the force that moves it; if furthermore we assume—what in fact we know—that some at least of the parts of this mechanism are conscious, know which way they turn, and can comprehend, however imperfectly, that their own particular motion is a necessary part of the whole,—then may we not see how it is possible that there should come in a sense of choice in the workings of such conscious parts? Leilnitz affirmed that a magnetic needle, were it conscious, must feel that it had all the points of the compass to choose from, and chose to point to the North.

Moreover, in this self-moving machine of the universe, each such conscious part as we have been supposing would be, *and would be more or less clearly conscious of being*, a part of the force which works through the whole. For though we speak of the universe as a machine, the all-important characteristic must be remembered that it derives all its force from itself and not from any external source. As to the ultimate origin of force as we find it in the physical world, we are confessedly in the dark; but no speculation into the nature and significance of this world of force and matter can afford to overlook the fact of consciousness, and that of which consciousness is the manifestation, mind or spirit. Now it is at least possible that in spirit we may have the motor power of the universe—the original and permanent source of its force and energy. If this were the case, it is not difficult to see how spirit, appearing in certain complex parts of the machine, should feel itself to be what in truth it is—the moving force, while yet it might not be conscious that though a part of such force, it is yet, as a mere part, subservient to the whole, with no power of acting contrary to the general movement of the whole. The existence of such omnipresent spirit is of course an assumption and is incapable of all direct proof, but if it should render intelligible and harmonious the contradictions we have

encountered, it may rank as, at least, a not improbable hypothesis.

According to the view here very imperfectly sketched, the individual man is determined in his character and actions by the course of nature in the universe, and ultimately by the universal spirit which constitutes the motor force of the universe, and of which the individual spirit is but an infinitesimally small part. Man then is determined, just as is any other product of nature,—he is determined by the whole of which he is a part,—but he is free, for he is a part, and a conscious part, of that Force which determines all nature, himself included.

Can we then retain our moral judgments? We not only can, we must; they, too, follow from our nature and are the inevitable results of the past. On the other hand ethical science is not incompatible with man's freedom, since his actions are not the less subject to law because found, on a last analysis, to be based on the self determination of the Spirit. Here, just as in the previous problem of the relation of mind and body, we must not hope to *prove* that, the very essence of which is, that if true at all it is an *ultimate* truth, and therefore not susceptible of direct demonstration. All we can hope for is such a rational conception as is found to accord with the facts, and enables us to see the seemingly contradictory sides of the antithesis resolved into a concrete and harmonious unity.

CHAPTER V.

THE PERSONALITY OF GOD.

Before passing on to our final problem, let us briefly review the steps already taken in our examination into the nature of personality. Regarding the person, first, as the unit of which man's body and mind are the two corresponding and concomitant aspects, we found that it appeared highly probable that this "double-sidedness" was not limited to man or even to the higher forms of animal life, but that wherever we find a material organism, or even a material atom, we may fairly assume that such has a "psychical side," or rudimentary potentiality of consciousness. This hypothesis we saw bridged over, or rather filled up, the otherwise vast chasm between conscious and unconscious life, which is so inconsistent with that continuity of progress which modern science teaches us to look for in the course of natural evolution. According to this theory, psychic life is present throughout all matter at first as a mere potentiality of incipient feeling, but becoming more and more highly developed as more and more complex organisms are evolved. We next considered self-consciousness, which is an essential part in the concept of personality. We saw that, while a rudimentary and isolated sensitivity may be present in all organisms, it is only when memory is established that self-consciousness becomes possible. Even memory, however, we found did not make its appearance suddenly, and fully formed at once, but appeared first as merely an inherited instinct, so that while we may affirm the existence of memory to form the lowest limit at which personality is conceivable, yet we see that even this indicates not so much a hard and fast boundary line dividing higher from lower mentality, as the gradual dawn of a clearer psychical life. Personality thus is not the characteristic of a certain limited class of or-

ganic beings, all of whom equally and in the same sense possess it; rather it is an ideal conception, to which an ever closer approximation is made as a higher stage is reached in the scale of existence.

In considering personality as individual character, we saw that this, too, had a perfectly natural origin, being in part traceable to inherited ancestral qualities, and in part the effect of the complex influences which work upon the individual from the commencement of his life. Finally, taking heredity and environment as constituting the sole causes of any man's character, we endeavored to show what conception of the world was demanded in order to harmonize the apparently conflicting claims of the consciousness of personal freedom, and the fact of moral character being necessarily determined by antecedent causes. For this we postulated a view of the universe at once mechanical and spiritual. The individual we pictured as a part of the vast machinery, his acts being inevitable results of the forces at work in the whole. Yet that man is conscious of a freedom of choice is accounted for, if, remembering that the universe must have its motor power within itself, we assume this inner force to be spiritual, since then those parts of the mechanism which are self-conscious are, and just in so far as their self-consciousness is developed *consciously* are, themselves a part of the force which animates the whole. This view is completely in harmony with what we have before seen of the gradual dawn and increase of personality in the animal kingdom. And here, to make our meaning clearer, let us take as examples three living things in the world, representing three widely different stages of organic development,—a plant, one of the higher animals, and a man. All three alike share in the spiritual life of the universe, all act in accordance with its laws. Each has both a psychical and a physical side. But while we may assume the plant to be wholly devoid of self-consciousness, and therefore to have no feeling of choice, the animal may be supposed to possess a vague and rudimentary self-consciousness and a correspondingly undeveloped feeling of choice, while in the civilized, adult man the consciousness of self is thor-

oughly explicated, and the sense of a power to choose is constant and clear.

Such is the account that has been given of the scope and significance of personality, and if we could assume that in man we had the highest and fullest manifestation of the conjunction of the physical and psychical, our task would be ended. But the very view we have seen it necessary to take of the universe suggests a still higher and more comprehensive sphere of personality. For if we hold the force which moves in the universe to be essentially spirit, we are in fact accepting a philosophical Pantheism. If spirit, of which our highest known type is the knowing, feeling, willing soul of man, is the original and perpetual source of the life of the world, we are driven to identify this Life, this Force, this Soul of the universe, with God. Shall we then ascribe personality to God? This is our final and most difficult problem.

Before directly discussing this question we may find it advisable to take up here the subject referred to in a previous chapter, i. e., the apparently total isolation and separateness of each individual self-consciousness from every other. This isolation is in a sense absolute; my emotions, desires, sensations, thoughts, all the multitude of conscious and semi-conscious states that make up my past and present history, present themselves to me as a separate stream flowing in its own channel and not mixing with any of the neighboring streams. But while this is necessarily the appearance which the individual's life history presents to himself, yet it gives only a partial and incomplete view of the true facts. What we have seen to be the forces which create character, show that this separateness is not so thorough-going as we are apt to suppose. The influence of environment consists in the effect of adjacent parts of the universe of things upon the individual. Heredity is the deriving of what is bodily and spiritual from others. Thus the stream of a man's character has had its source in other streams, and has its current and direction determined by the nature of the objects through which it must take its course. And if the self-conscious spirit of man is a portion

of the whole force of the universe, he has, moreover, a common substratum which he shares with all his fellow creatures. He is, then, not merely *like* his fellows, he is in the fullest sense *one with them*—one with Nature herself. And here philosophical speculation has only brought us by slow steps within sight of a truth which the greatest poets of all ages, but especially of our own, have grasped by the strength of an intuitive insight. It might be shown how this community of the spirit of man with the spirit of the universe is exhibited in our higher aesthetic feelings,—we might see how it renders intelligibly the apparent antinomies of sense-perception,—how it explains our sensitiveness to the sufferings of others, and how it constitutes at once both the source and the justification of our highest religious emotions. But these questions lie beyond our present mark. We must here restrict ourselves to a brief examination as to whether or not personality, such as we have hitherto found it, can with any true significance be applied to that spiritual, inner, life of the universe, to the conception of which it has itself led us. This we will now consider.

Let us take the case of a human personality, as being its most typical and generally recognized form. Man, we saw, consisted of mind and body, which are the two aspects under which his personality presents itself. If there be an all-persuading spirit in the universe,—an eternal mind of which the mind of man is at once an outcome and a symbol,—then we cannot fail to see how this mysterious concomitance of mind and body in the human person has its magnificent counterpart in the all-comprehensive unity of spirit and matter in which the Infinite Being of the universe is revealed. The whole physical universe, including not only all that science has opened up to us of far distant worlds, but the infinite extent of space itself and all that it contains, are the external Form in which is incorporated the eternal Mind.

It has indeed been urged that there can be no mind in the universe as a whole, because, so far as we can see there are no signs of a nervous system there. Brain, being the physical basis of our mental phenomena, it is assumed that higher

forms of mental activity must have a similar basis. Surely this is the shallowest reasoning. It is strange that it should have been put forth by Professor Clifford, who by his theory of "mind-stuff" first directed English thought to the hypothesis that all matter possessed a psychical life. If feelings may exist in matter which is not highly enough organized to possess nerve cells and fibres—why may there not be mental organism at least as far *above* the human as that of the atom is *below* it, and why may not this have a material basis, as unlike, and as indefinitely more complex than, the human brain, as the latter is above the structureless matter of the atom?

But we certainly encounter more serious difficulties in respect to an Infinite Spirit when we come to consider self-consciousness as an essential characteristic of personality. For, as we have indicated, our own human self-consciousness always appears as separate from others,—as limited by the non-ego. Nor can we imagine ourselves as free from such limitations and yet retaining a consciousness of self. But the universal mind cannot be supposed to be thus limited by a not-self, since it would then lose its essential characteristic of infinitude. If the Infinite-Ego be co-extensive with the universe, there can be no non-ego outside of it from which it can differentiate itself; and without some distinction of the self from the not-self can there be self-consciousness? Without self-consciousness can there be personality? And, finally, without personality can there be God—can there be Spirit at all? Granted there is mind in certain parts of the universe, in man himself for instance, have we any ground for speaking of such mind as a unity? or is such language merely the hypostatizing of an abstraction of thought? are there, in short '*spirits*' but not *Spirit*? Such are some of the perplexing questions that meet us and must be answered if we would place our belief in a Divine Being, at once infinite and personal, on a firm philosophical basis.

In endeavoring to meet these objections, let us begin by recalling the suggestive truth that the hypothesis of one spiritual force as penetrating and animating the universe, if main-

tainable on other grounds, renders intelligible many otherwise inexplicable facts in respect to our emotional and moral nature, our perception of external things, and the relations of natural things to one another. That scientific men, totally free from theological bias,—even rather disposed to discredit any theory that might serve as a buttress to religious dogma, recognize in force something which points to such an absolute spirit, is at least a noteworthy circumstance. A single quotation from Mr. Spencer may serve to illustrate this trend of thought :

“ If we take the highest product of evolution, civilized society, and ask to what agency all its marvels must be credited, the inevitable answer is : To that unknown cause of which the entire Cosmos is a manifestation.”

Of this “ Unknown Cause,” Mr. Spencer further states that the question in regard to it must be, not whether we shall affirm of it personality or something lower, but whether it possesses personality or something higher.

With regard to the difficulty of conceiving an ego not limited by a non-ego, there are two thoughts that may be suggested. First : as we have seen, in the case of man the limitations which shut us in are in truth not absolute but relative. We do distinguish between the self and the not-self, yet just those things which we regard as the not-self,—the complex of presentations of the world around us, in as much as they are presentations, are forming a part of our mental life. That we know ourselves as limited, as shut in by other things, is not in fact what constitutes our personality ; rather it is this limitation which shows our personality to be still imperfect. Personality grows in concrete fullness and truth as knowledge extends and will-power increases. It is our ignorance and impotence that enclose us within the sphere of the individual. So that we are led to conclude with Lotze that,—“ *Perfect* personality is reconcilable only with the notion of an Infinite Being, to those that are finite only an approximation to it is attainable.” (*Grundzüge der Religionsphilosophie*, p. 46.)

Secondly : Hegel has shown how spirit may be conceived

as differentiating itself, by the very fact of that self-manifestation which is essential to it as spirit. In this view the eternal self-externalization of spirit is identical with its manifestation in the material universe, by which it has continually presented to itself an "other" than itself, while as infinite it yet includes this "other" in itself. Thus the Hegelian system points to a constant self-limitation of the Infinite as the medium of its eternal self-realization. From this standpoint the difficulty of conceiving the absolute spirit as differentiated in order that it should be self-conscious, vanishes.

Finally : we must beware of confounding the conception of God as personal with the anthropomorphic view of the Divinity. When we say that we hold that there is a God, that he is spirit, and that by spirit we mean that of which we know directly in the mind of man, we do not imply thereby that God is *like* man. Rather, reverting to Biblical language we may say that man is made in the image of God. Accordingly, when we consider the character of God, we have not to do, as in the case of man, with the origin or sources of His character, for, by hypothesis, we are dealing with the soul of the universe to which no beginning can be conceived. Nor can we imagine growth and development in the Infinite,—rather it contains, complete in itself, the eternal possibility of the whole evolution of material forms and conscious life. If, however, the spirit of man is a type of the Divine Spirit, then the emotional, intellectual, and moral sides of man's nature, which, as science tells us every day more plainly, have their elementary and imperfect counterparts in the mental life of animals lower than ourselves, have also their perfect and ideal antitypes in the nature of that universal Spirit in which we all live, and move, and have our being. How faulty and defective our highest notion of personality may, or rather must, be to bring before us the Divine Person, we can never fully realize. That it is in truth utterly inadequate to represent Him, follows inevitably from our application of a concept which we have reached by a comparison of finite things to that Infinitude which embraces in itself all these finite modifications. Yet to such concepts we

are necessarily limited, we can only describe that which reaches out beyond all knowledge in terms of what we can more fully grasp. Nor can we regard ourselves as erring if we ascribe to the Divinity which shapes the ends of the whole course of nature, whatever in the human soul seems greatest and purest and best to that soul itself.

“Thou, dread source,
Prime, self-existing Cause and End of all
That in the scale of being fill their place,
Above our human region, or below,
Set and sustained, . . . Thou, Thou alone
Art Everlasting, and the blessed spirits
Whom thou includest as the sea her waves :
For adoration thou endurest ; endure
For consciousness the motions of thy will ;
For apprehension those transcendent truths
Of the pure intellect, that stand as laws
(Submission constituting strength and power)
Even to thy Being's infinite majesty !”
(Wordsworth's Excursion.)

